

The Voice

May 2024



A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

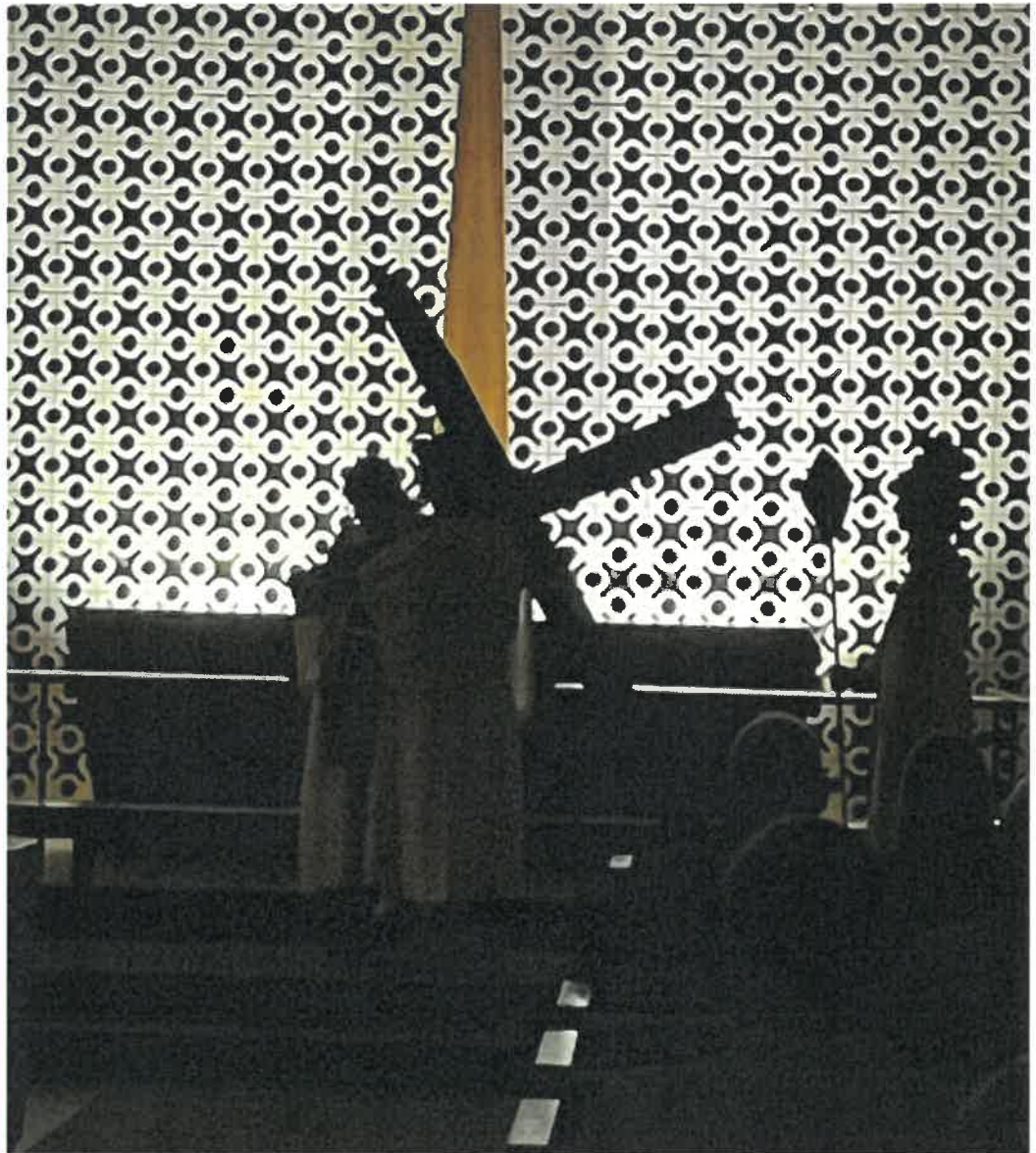
*A Congregation of the
Northeastern
Minnesota Synod, ELCA*

Good Friday worship:

First Lutheran Youth presented the Stations of the Cross in silhouette



**A book idea for you
See page 9**



Members of the youth group, Steve Saari, and Nancy McBride presented the Stations of the Cross as a reader's theatre with music. Each station was created by the young people in silhouette to tell the story of Jesus' death on the cross and prepare us for the resurrection of our Lord on Easter Sunday.



**Youth activities
See page 8.**

From the Pastor's Desk

Greetings all! Happy May! Hopefully we are done with snow and sun is on the horizon! I'd like to share with you this month that May is not just the month of green peeking through and the hope of flowers and warmer weather, but it's also a month focused on hope and healing. May is National Mental Health awareness month. A month dedicated to reducing the stigma around mental illness and sharing information about where to get help when help is needed. First, some quick facts (from NAMI.org):

- 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year, and only half of them receive treatment.
- 1 in 20 U.S. adults experience a serious mental illness each year, and only two-thirds receive treatment.
- 1 in 6 U.S. youth experience a mental health condition each year, and only half of them receive treatment.
- 50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24.
- The average delay between onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is 11 years.

While this may feel overwhelming and while we, as a society, have further to go to provide help and support to all, all is not lost. There are some excellent resources available right here in our community for those who need support for their mental health and for the people who love and care for them. One place to go is our synod; NEMN synod has its own mental health team along with a wonderful mental health wellness coordinator, Joy Hensel (who visited us last January). Joy has created a toolkit of resources that can be found at nemnsynod.org. This toolkit covers both wellness education as well as mental health resources and where to go for help. She is also available to talk if needed.

Gather Magazine, the publication of the Women of the ELCA (WELCA), has also dedicated their May devotional to mental health and mental health awareness in ministry. Through stories of Biblical matriarchs and patriarchs who are thought to have been facing depression and other mental health conditions, they highlight the importance of awareness and compassion when it comes to mental health. This devotional also shares examples of how these individuals in Biblical times reached out to community and found support as a means for healing, also reminding us that ultimately when it comes to anything we face as individuals or as a society, "Jesus' earthly life of compassion, service and healing is our model."

Often, for those of us who suffer from mental illness, it can feel like no one understands what we are going through or that we need to feel shame for needing help, but I assure you, the opposite is true. We are not alone. No one needs to suffer in silence, and there is no shame in asking for help; there are companions to walk with you if and when you need to take that step. If you or a loved one is struggling with mental health, please know there is help for you. I am available to talk confidentially, and, as I am not a mental health professional, I can help point you to resources. There are others who can do this as well.

Blessings to you friends, and know that wherever you are on your journey, your community is here to love and support you. You are valuable and deserve wholeness and health.

Your friend in Christ, Pastor Christie

(PS. If you'd like a copy of that *Gather* devotional for the month of May you can pick one up in the church office! I've left copies on the desk.)

See page 9 for a list of helplines and resources.



FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

March 21, 2024

Present:, Treasurer Brad Ettestad, Secretary Carol Bass, Discipleship BettyJeanne Henrickson, Service/Outreach Brenda Bertilson, Pastor Christie Manisto, President Brian Briggs, Fellowship Cynthia Warren,
Absent: Worship & Music Rachel Hasbargen Glowack

Meeting called to order by President Brian Briggs at 6:00 PM.

Devotion: Cynthia Warren "The Fast Life"

Next month's Devotion: Betty Henrickson

Addition to Agenda: Potential candidate for Youth Rep on council, and Pastor

will need a credit/gift card to cover expenses at youth gathering in July as all vendors there are cashless.

Minutes from February meeting: Copies provided to all. No corrections or additions.

Motion: To accept the minutes of the February 2024 meeting.

Made by: Cynthia Warren Seconded by: Brenda Bertilson

Carried

Treasurer Report: We received an annual gift so the financial looks good for February. However, since this is a special gift, we are still in need of looking at our budgets and not doing unnecessary spending. Look for cost-saving ideas.

Motion: To accept treasurer's report for February 2024.

Made by: Lloyd Skogstad

Seconded by: Cynthia Warren

Carried

Pastor's Report

Feb 23-March 21: Pastor's Report

Pastoral acts

Led worship and participated in ecumenical Lenten services and noon Lenten services.

visitation and pastoral care phone calls, meetings and cards with

members

funeral planning for Lori Awe's funeral on April 13 th and Deanna Rassmussen on March 30 th

holy week planning with Kathi and Nancy—(including wrangling musicians).

4 book studies

resumed 9am Sunday bible study.

planning a new member class for April

will visit homebound folks on Maundy Thursday with bulletins, communion and easter surprises with BettyJeanne

Community

Continuing to serve as part of the Rotary welcoming community team. Meetings continue.

1 meeting with the Kooch Aging board.

Part of an ELCA cohort group meeting on Thursdays on Zoom for one

hour for 18 weeks discussing the art of listening in preaching and

community. I will receive a \$1000 educational stipend following the

completion of the cohort and plan to use the funds on study to benefit

first.

Council, continued on page 4

**Rev. Christie Manisto,
Pastor**

Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Friday—9 a.m. to noon

218-283-2208

www.firstlutheranifalls.org

firstlutheranifalls@gmail.com

Council minutes (continued from page 3)

Youth

- Sent 1 first family's newsletter. (these are behind due to Lent—this is my fault).
- National youth gathering meetings and fundraising planning including kickoff of the raffle and prep for the brunch on Palm Sunday
- Planning a "senior Sunday" to honor our graduating seniors on May 5th —students' families have been contacted.
- Held a first communion class on March 17th after worship. Ava will take her first communion on Easter.

Synod

- Pastor's text study Littlefork
- Conference assembly meeting in Cook (Steve Saari is our voting member who attended with me)
- officially voted on as a VLM board member first meeting Thursday March 21st

Admin

- Committee meetings (finance, building and grounds, care corps etc.)
- met with Bishop Amy re: exploration team.

Personal

submitting my days off and away for the remainder of the year
Upcoming

- March 30th Rassmussen funeral (10-12)
- March 31 Easter
- April 1 Office closed (I will do graveside that day)
- April 2nd Text study in Ely
- April 7th preaching at Ft. Frances
- April 8th mutual ministry meeting in Cook
- April 14th Awe Funeral
- April 18th Laurentian conference Gathering at First (Steve and I will share about Cairo

Committee Reports:

President – Nothing to report.

Vice-President – Position is vacant.

Service/Outreach – Brenda reported there were 5 volunteers at community café, 28 Easter cards were sent. FELW continues to plan a get together with local ELCA churches, in April. Food drive went well with many items collected for the Koochiching Food Access.

Discipleship – Confirmation resumes after Easter. Youth have been coming to Wednesday Lenten services and making soups. Raffle tickets as a fund raiser for New Orleans are being sold.

Fellowship – Lenten soup lunches are going well and good attendance. Cynthia will be making scones for the Palm Sunday brunch which is another fund-raiser for the New Orleans youth trip. Planning BBQs during summer with the first one to be on June 1st, which will also be a work-day to do some spring cleaning in church and grounds.

Building and Grounds: Lloyd submitted the following report: We met Tuesday March 12th at 10:30. Present were Pastor Christie, BettyJeanne Henrickson, Steve Lindberg, and Lloyd Skogstad

1. We discussed carpet choices for the front entrances. Samples were brought in by BettyJeanne. BettyJeanne is also exploring the carpet choices for Memorial Hall, the Pastor's office, and the business office.

2. We will purchase and install new pull-down ladders in the area behind the sanctuary and upstairs leading to the organ.

3. We discussed the rubber (flat) roof repair/replacement and determined that we will talk with Range Roofing about replacement as we cannot continue to pay for annual repairs. Lloyd Has Range Roofing coming up to inspect the roof and determine its condition. They will be up as the weather permits.

4. We discussed our assistance to the Worship and Music committee. We can help with access or anything else that



Next WELCA meeting scheduled for May 7th

Minutes of Women of the ELCA
April 8, 2024

Brenda Bertilson read devotions from *Guidepost* magazine titled, "Lean on Me."

The mission and purpose statements were read.
The minutes from the March meeting were read and approved.

The treasurer's report was reviewed.

Old Business:

Finalized plans for the WELCA county-wide gathering to be April 17th at 11 a.m. Please RSVP to the church office by April 23rd.

The summer convention is in Grand Rapids, June 10-11. We must register by May 17th.

New Business:

Kathi Henrickson is attending a Parish Nurse Course. It was voted and approved to give her \$1,000 toward expenses.

Our March food drive items totaled 238.15 lbs. this year.

This year's soup/chili cook-off raised \$154.00 for Koochiching County Food Access.

Anyone wanting yarn for prayer shawls, etc, please contact Sandy Harju at 218-283-5733.

There are many colors to choose from.

Next meeting is Tuesday, May 7th at 5:00 p.m.

Sandy Harju, Secretary

March FoodShare Results

Many thanks to everyone who donated or helped in any way with the March FoodShare campaign. We did well!!

A total of 238.15 pounds of food and personal care items were delivered to the KCFA (food shelf). The soup and chili challenge brought in \$156.00 in donations. The FELW donated \$500.00 and an individual donated \$150.00.

These funds also went to the food shelf.

Many thanks!! We have helped a lot of people!

Begin your planning now!

Christmas in July

Will be here

Before you know it!

(Continued from page 4)

they need.

5. We are planning a "Spring Workday" for June 1 st to get a few items completed. Window washing, raised bed garden building, put up a basketball hoop, maybe even set up a bench for relaxation time. Pastor Christie may even do a barbecue. Of course this day will depend on the beautiful borderland weather. Please bring your ideas and your energy. Let's have fun.

Thank You Lloyd Skogstad B & G Committee Chair.

Concerning the carpet: This will be done in stages, starting with Pastor's office. The money for the carpet itself will come from dedicated funds with volunteer labor. The roofing company will be sending someone up within the next week to look over things. Some staining has been noted on ceiling tiles. The roof project would be guaranteed for 30 years and there would be extra tiles for any spot repairs.

Organ cleaning: Betty Jeanne received a rough estimate of what it would take to clean and tune the organ, possibly \$15,000 or more. There are over 300 pipes to remove, clean and restore. Someone will come to look at it in May,

Finance: Brad thanked Pastor for sending out the stewardship letter. The Finance Committee met last week and will have a sub-committee for fund-raising.

Music & Worship: Absent

Old Business:

1. The final report of the Exploration Team is finished, and everyone should read their copy. We will meet on Wednesday, 27 th at 4:00 pm. To discuss findings and determine where we go from here.

New Business:

1. Vice-presidency – No candidates at present. If anyone knows of someone interested, please submit the name to the council.

Motion: To accept the resignation of Hoa Sobczynski as Vice-President

Made by: Brad Ettestad

Seconded by: Cynthia Warren

Carried

2. Pastor's schedule – Pastor Christie away schedule (for approval)
 April 7 th preaching at Ft. Francis (Nancy preaching)
 May 19 th council retreat (Nancy preaching)
 July 14-21 ELCA youth gathering (will need supply preacher for July 21 st)
 July 29-August 4th—Vacation: taking a week to do a BWCA trip with conference pastors. Will need a supply preacher for the 4 th (am taking that day off) will also set up emergency coverage.
 August 4-9 th Camp Vermilion camp chaplain as a rep of First Lutheran (so will be working from Vermilion that week Sunday-Thursday—not vacation)
 Sept 26-30 th Vacation: In Washington state for a friend's wedding. (will need supply preacher for sept 29 th)
 December 25-Jan 1 (2025) Vacation: week off after Christmas (will need supply preacher)
 Weeks off in 2024=3 (BWCA trip, Washington state, 2 days in Jan, 2 days in Feb, 1 sick day in March)
 Sundays off as vacation in 2024=4 (MLK weekend, Aug 4 th , Sept 29 th , December 29 th)
 Sundays off for church business—council retreat, youth gathering and preaching at ft Francis.)
 Total 7 Sundays away
 For any Sundays on which Nancy is not available, Brenda Tibbets, retired Deacon, is helping out at Cook and might be available.

3. Parish Nurse Program – Kathi Henrickson would like to take the Parish Nurse Certification and has asked council to consider paying for program. The registration cost is \$450, and Kathi would pay room and board. Kathi has unofficially been doing some of the duties already, visiting and caring for ill/hospitalized members.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Motion: That the registration fee for Kathi Henrickson to the Parish Nurse Certification Program be paid from church funds.

Made by: Brad Ettestad Seconded by: Lloyd Skogstad

Carried

4. Youth Council Member: There has been a volunteer to fill the position and if the council agrees, would start in April. The council agreed unanimously to welcome this

young person, Lachlan Reiners.

5. New Orleans trip: It will be necessary for Pastor to have either a credit card or gift card when she accompanies the youth to the New Orleans Conference to access the funds as all vendors there are cashless. It was decided a credit card was the best option which could be reloaded with funds in case of emergency. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM

Next Executive Meeting: April 16th at 5 PM

Next Council Meeting: April 18th at 5:00

Respectfully submitted by:

Carol Bass, Secretary

Just thought you should know...

May 5th – Senior Sunday! Come and congratulate our graduating seniors. We will have special prayers in church and a cake to honor them during coffee hour after worship.

May 12th – New Member Reception! We will receive our new members during worship and then celebrate them at coffee hour.

May 18-19th – Council Retreat! Pastor Christie and the council will be away for a time of strategic planning, conversation, and fellowship.

May 29th – Last Day of Confirmation! Parents and students are invited for fun and an ice cream social.

Can we help?

If you know of someone going through a tough time, who may be in need of a quick and easy meal, consider reaching out to "Helping Hands". A ready-to-heat meal can be delivered to them.

Please contact the church office with information.

let's be friends



@FIRSTLUTHERANC



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA**



**THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®**

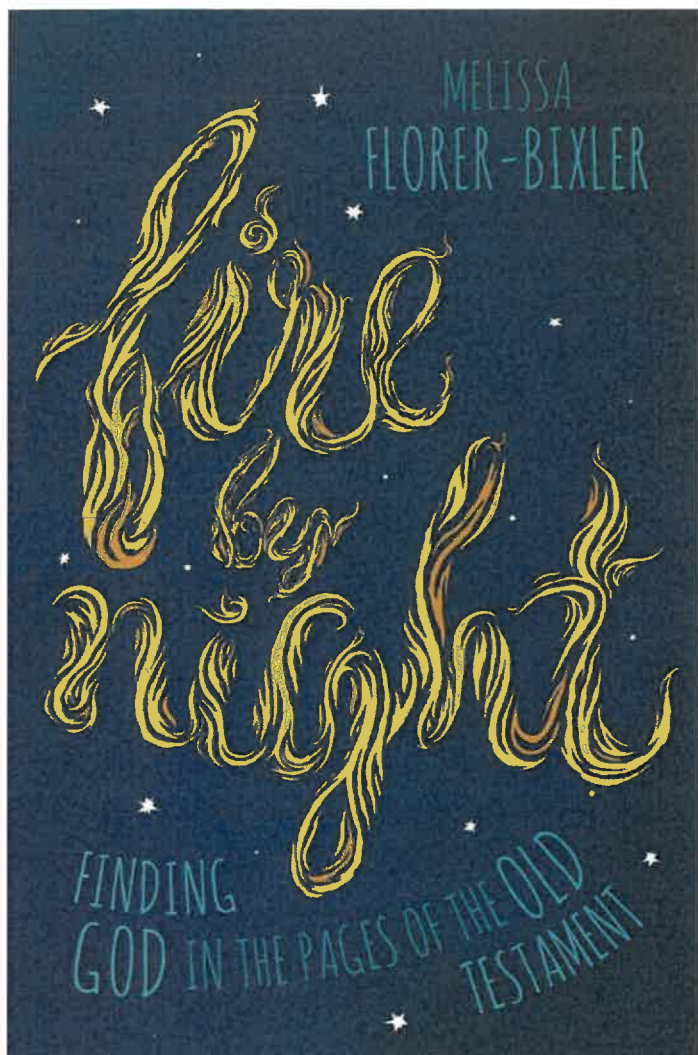
First Lutheran Youth: What's Up?

Raffle and dinner a big success for youth

First Lutheran is sending six youth and three adult chaperones to the ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans this summer.

Thank you so much for your amazing show of support. We couldn't have done it without you!





This month's book study features *Fire by Night* by Melissa Florer-Bixler

From the foreword by Dr. Luke Powery: The same passages that confuse and horrify and baffle us can, if we are paying attention, lure us closer toward God. This God has traveled with people through cloud and fire, by day and by night, since the beginning of time. The Old Testament is a perplexing book of profound grace, hope, and beauty. It is a book of fire. To read the Old Testament is to draw close to God's love, which continues to burn away our expectations and set us ablaze. This God has traveled with people through pillars of cloud and fire, by day and by night, since the days of the exodus.

"[A] fantastic debut. . . . [This] impressive exploration of Old Testament themes will be a blessing for Christians seeking intellectually grounded spiritual guidance." -- Publishers Weekly starred review

Call the church office for more information.

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:

Dial: 988

Visit www.988lifeline.org for more info.

Crisis Text Line:

www.crisistextline.org

Text HOME to 741741 for free, 24/7 crisis support in the US.

MN Farm & Rural Help Line:

833-600-2670 x 1

Free, confidential help for stress, anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts. Available 24/7.

Northland Counseling Center

1-218-283-3406

northlandcounselingifalls.org

It's
Okay
not to be
Okay



Thank you to our worship assistants: Don Nut-hak, Diane McCarthy, Cynthia Warren, Nancy and Duayne Johnson, Makenna Welchel, Grace Weisz, Sandy Harju, Brenda Bertilson, Carol Bass, Darlene Fitjje, Tim & Ronna MacKay, Pat Ettestad, Kitty Sandstrom, Ardel Henrickson, BettyJeanne Henrickson, Deb Scofield, Laurie Lindberg, Loni Bright.

Thank you to the parents and kids for the raffle and fundraisers.

Thank you to all our musicians!

Prayer Chain

Please consider serving as a member of the Prayer Chain.

First Lutheran Church has four active prayer chains. If you have prayer requests for someone, or yourself, call either the church office at 283-2208, or Brenda Bertilson 283-2144; 240-4939. You must have permission to put someone on the chain, either from the person, or from a close relative. To put someone on the list for Sunday prayers, call the office at 283-2208. Please call back when they can be removed.

Remember in your prayers, those in need and those in care facilities.

Good Samaritan: Jackie Christiansen, Margi Roeder, Ruby Radford, Barb (Strandberg) Wichner, Lorraine Nelson

Northwinds Assisted Living: Vicki Freeberg, Terry Lucachick

Littlefork Care Center: Henry Carey, Dick Bergh, Russel Millender

Ranier Roost: Ruth Millender

General Fund Financial Information

As of March 31, 2024

Thank you for supporting First Lutheran Church!

	Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Variance		Year To Date Actual	Year To Date Budget	Variance
Operating Income	14,784	15,891	(1,107)		49,981	47,673	2,308
Operating Expense	15,208	15,891	683		44,752	47,673	2,921
Operating Income Less Expense	(424)		(424)		5,229		5,229

May Birthdays

5/3	Dorothy Johnson		Craig McKenzie
5/4	Kallie Briggs	5/13	Gary Coran
	Douglas Dault		Courtney Youso
	Terry Lucachick	5/15	Tim Bright
5/5	Colin Hebner		Thomas Sether
5/6	Andrew Bergstrom		BethAnne Slatinski
	Neil Fittje	5/16	JoAnn Wuollet
	BettyJeanne Henrickson	5/17	Loni Bright
	Payten Rousseau		Alexander Rousseau
	Darcie Schulz	5/18	Dena Bergstrom
	Piper Tomczak	5/19	Melissa Voigt
5/7	Skylar Kucera-Schneider	5/20	Allen Rasmussen
5/8	Darlene Fittje	5/22	Bailey Herberg
5/9	Dawn Kruger	5/23	Patrick Rein
	Iris Steinbach	5/24	Walter Buller
5/10	Anthony Osse	5/25	Lisa McKenzie
	Lloyd Skogstad	5/26	Wilson Johnson
	Emily Treat	5/27	Sharla Eide
5/11	Elizabeth Blight		Marlene Wagner
	Gracie Froemke	5/28	Mary Perala
	Grace Weisz		Miranda Templeton
5/12	Wendy Hanson	5/29	Callen Short
	Anna Jensen	5/30	Irene Johnson
	Cammi Jensen		James Miggins
	Soren Lindquist	5/31	Roger Luettjohann



BACKUS COMMUNITY CAFE SERVES FREE, HOT MEALS. TO EVERYONE.

- Serving a free, hot, nutritious dinner from 5 to 6 p.m., Tues. & Thurs.
- Meals are dine-in only; there is no pick-up dining at this time.
- EVERYONE is welcome. Please call the Backus office on café day and We'll have dinner ready for you!
- There is no charge for meals, but donations are gratefully accepted.

The April volunteers were Carol Bass, Penny Wakeley, Sandy Harju, Brenda Bertilson, Nancy Johnson, and Laurie Lindberg.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA
123 Wayside Lane
International Falls, MN 56649

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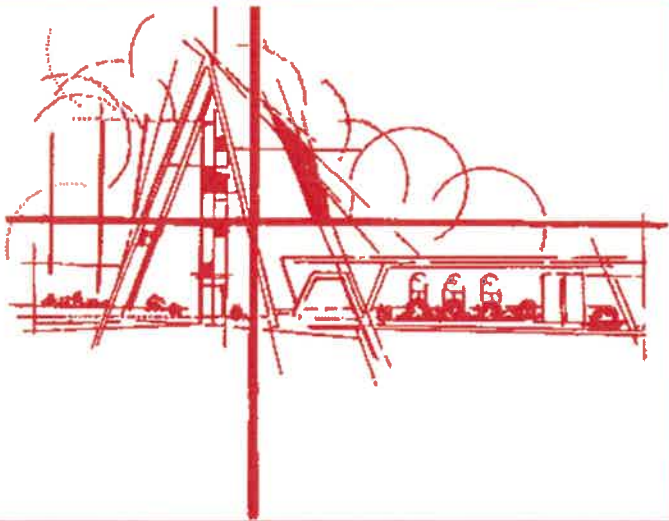
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May 2024
NEWSLETTER



First Lutheran Church, ELCA

WHEREVER YOU ARE ON YOUR JOURNEY, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!



First Lutheran's Mission Statement *Sharing God's Grace*

First Lutheran's Vision Statement
*First Lutheran Church will be a congregation
that shares God's grace by:*

- + Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ with integrity.
- + Welcoming all to active involvement in ministry.
- + Offering a non-judgmental encounter with God through the celebration of liturgical worship with word and sacrament.
- + Responding faithfully to the Great Commission of Matthew 28 -- to grow.
- + Committing ourselves to serving the needs of our congregation and the community at large.

WORSHIP SERVICE

Available on our website, YouTube, and Facebook
Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS

Mon. through Thurs., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Office: 218-283-2208

Check out our Website!

www.firstlutheranifalls.org

Look for us on Instagram and Facebook.